



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

Medicinal
1835

1121

33.

504.



600042314K



THE VALIDITY

OF THE

“ THOUGHTS ON MEDICAL REFORM,

BY

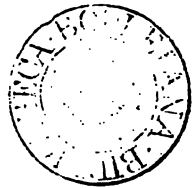
A RETIRED PRACTITIONER;”

CONSIDERED AND ELUCIDATED

BY AN EXERCENT PRACTITIONER.

“ Nihil est, quod ampliore curam postulet
Quam cogitare quid gerendum sit; dehinc
Incogitantes Fors non Consilium regit.”

Ausonius de Ludo S. S.



LONDON :

LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMAN,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

1833.

504.

Printed by A. U. Thiselton, 37, Goodge Street, London.

THE VALIDITY

OF THE

“THOUGHTS ON MEDICAL REFORM,”

&c. &c.

ENCOMIUMS have been so lavishly bestowed on the “Thoughts on Medical Reform, by a retired Practitioner,” that I was induced to procure and peruse the Pamphlet. I have been disappointed in the perusal. Instead of finding thoughts on the subject of Medical Reform based in extensive knowledge of the present state of medicine, and offering enlarged views for furthering scientific attainments, and, of course, encreasing the utility of the Profession; I meet with a most wonderful unacquaintance with the present state of the Profession, and with suggestions, which, if adopted, must reduce both the science, and the practice of Medicine to the lowest state of degradation. “As every one,” the author says, “is allowed to preach the gospel who can procure hearers, so every one should have liberty to practise Physic who can obtain patients.” Those who preach, and comment upon the gospel are, we know, a motley set. The educated and the uneducated; those who are regularly ordained and those who are interlopers; Christians, Deists, Atheists; the moral and the profligate are all at liberty to preach, or to distort, the doctrines of the gospel:

Whether the world has become the wiser or the better, for this freedom from any restraint in the Preachers, may be doubted; but in the case of the gospel the mischief is retrievable. Ignorant, profligate, or perverse zealots may preach and inculcate false and dangerous doctrines, but the public have the Divine volume in their own hands; they may exercise the reason their Creator has given them, they may read, compare, and judge: if they have once gone wrong they may afterwards learn to go right; if they have sinned they have the means of repentance pointed out; there is still a covert from the storm to which they may retreat.

But if every one however ignorant, however rash, however dishonest, however immoral, be "at liberty to practise Physic who can obtain patients," where will the mischief of such a system end? Oh, thinks the author of "Thoughts," I have a remedy for this mischief; "he who practises Physic badly, may be prosecuted for his bad practice;" a most comfortable reflection, it must be allowed, for a patient, whose health has been ruined by physic, that he may seek redress at law; if—indeed the grave should not close over him before this poor redress is obtained! Truly this "deep thinker" proposes a strange mode of effecting Medical Reform.

Does the author of the pamphlet really mean what he says? can he wish to cause such a degradation of Medical Practice, as to admit into it any person whatsoever, who can by art, or craftiness, or venality, or puffing, obtain patients? or does some other motive, some secret object influence him?—there appears to be something behind the curtain not to be too speedily disclosed.

Do my readers recollect, that towards the close of the last session of Parliament, a Bill concocted by some Graduates of the Universities of Scotland, was, *with as*

much secrecy as possible, brought into the House of Commons? By this Bill, authority was to be given to every Graduate of a Scottish University, to settle in England, and practise as a general practitioner, without the necessity of subjecting himself, as required by the *now* existing law, to the Court of Examiners of the Society of Apothecaries in London, for examination as to his qualification so to practise.

"Well," perhaps my reader will exclaim, "and what possible objection can there be, to permit a gentleman, who has obtained the honor of a Diploma, constituting him a Doctor of Medicine, the highest grade of the profession, from practising, if he chooses, in an inferior grade, as a general practitioner? If he is fit to be a Physician, surely he is fit to be an Apothecary?"

This must be admitted to be plausible reasoning; but plausible as it seems, the whole reasoning is shaken to atoms by a single fact. Scottish graduates have, repeatedly, presented themselves for examination, before the Court of Examiners at Apothecaries' Hall; and many of them have been found so completely uninformed upon subjects, of which no Practitioner of Medicine ought to be ignorant, that the Court was compelled to refuse them Certificates of Qualification. In *one year*, of *twenty-four* applicants to the Court of Examiners, *eight* were found deficient; and, in consequence, rejected. One man, a Graduate of the University of Edinburgh, being found unable to read with the proper terminations, or to translate, the Prescription of a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, had his own Diploma placed before him, and *he could not translate a single line of the very Diploma, by which he was constituted a Doctor of Medicine.*

When these strong facts came to be generally known, the friends of the secretly introduced Bill felt, that they

were standing upon less secure ground than they at first supposed; and in a short time, so many petitions were presented against the Bill, and so many other petitions praying that Parliament would not confine itself to an alteration of the "Apothecaries Bill" alone, but enter into a full discussion of all the litigated points connected with Medicine and Medical Institutions, that it was found necessary to withdraw the Bill. The author of "Thoughts" impatiently brooks this defeat of the secret measure, he broods in his lofty mind upon the injury received, and pours forth, in his pamphlet, a portion of his anger upon all the general practitioners of Medicine, and upon the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries, who, through the instrumentality of their "Court of Examiners," have the privilege of withholding a license, from all of this class, who do not prove themselves competent to practise.

It might be supposed, when it was found that the vigilance of the Examiners at the Scottish Universities was eluded, and that by grinding, and cramming, and other such means, degrees were obtained by the unworthy—it might be supposed, that those who were most interested in the matter would go at once to the root of the evil, and establish such an improved mode of examination at these Universities, as would prevent such unfortunate occurrences in future; for certainly, it is, to use a very gentle term, most unseemly, that men should be rejected by the Court of Examiners in London, who have been admitted to a higher grade of the profession in Scotland: but instead of attempting to cure, as might easily be done, the evil at its source, the attempt was made to break through the barrier at a distance; that barrier which has hitherto prevented insufficiently educated Physicians from Scotland, from practising as general practitioners in England.

That this barrier was to be violently assailed may be inferred, after reading a very few paragraphs of the "Thoughts;" but the author is at a loss how to commence his attack. However, he thinks it safe to assert, that there always have been and will be irregular and ignorant Practitioners of Medicine; then he maintains that all persons, whatsoever, ought to be allowed to attend patients, if they can procure any; but notwithstanding this, he thinks that there ought to be different qualifications for different grades of practitioners; this leads to the observation, that retail Chemists and Druggists ought to have Diplomas, affording a "test, however small, of their sufficiency;" and now he has got a fine opening for his masked battery to begin to play. "Persons in want of *Medical assistance*," he says, "have as good a right to know who are and who are not qualified to compound and prepare drugs for their use, as to know who are qualified to write prescriptions for their maladies." His object is now sufficiently clear; he wishes so to jumble together the Apothecaries and the Chemists and Druggists, that they shall be supposed one and the same class of practitioners; and by thus mystifying and obscuring the whole subject, he supposes that he has paved the way for entire success in his attack on the "Apothecaries' Act."

In the preamble to the "Apothecaries' Act," it is stated as a reason for introducing new regulations, that "great numbers of persons, in many parts of England and Wales, were exercising the functions of an Apothecary, who were wholly ignorant and utterly incompetent to the exercise of such functions." "*These functions*," argues the author of "Thoughts," in his eager desire to debase the character of the Apothecary, "*are in their strict and legitimate exercise reducible to the art of preparing, compounding, and dispensing Medicines under the direction of*

a Physician;" then skipping over all else that is said, particularly that part which refers to "*the skill and abilities of the Apothecary in the science and practice of Medicine,*" he turns to the 28th section of the act, in which is a proviso, "that nothing in this act contained shall extend or be construed to extend to prejudice, or in any way affect the trade or business of a Chemist or Druggist, in the buying, *preparing, compounding, dispensing,* and vending drugs, *medicines,* and *medicinable compounds;*" and wishes to make his readers believe, that the Apothecaries or general Practitioners stand in no higher rank than the Chemists and Druggists; and that the act of Parliament considers and treats both alike. The act "was apparently," to use his own elegant expressions, "the result of a compromise between two trading companies, in which the public was sacrificed to their mutual jealousies and interests."

The author proceeds thus—

"The Chemists and Druggists, who *may be* persons 'wholly ignorant and utterly incompetent to exercise the functions of an Apothecary,' were maintained in their ancient right, 'of preparing, compounding, and dispensing Medicines,' though it *may* greatly endanger the health and lives of the community. The Apothecaries' Company obtained, on pretence of preventing 'such evils,' the new and lucrative privilege of being the sole dispensers of Certificates, qualifying persons to act as Apothecaries, that is, as general Practitioners in England, and Wales; with authority to prosecute every one, not then actually engaged in practice, who should exercise in future the functions of an Apothecary without procuring such a Certificate. In other words, the humblest and lowest branch of the Medical Profession were constituted the sole judges of the qualifications required from nine-tenths of the Medical Practitioners in England; and were armed, besides, with full powers to prevent and punish, by legal process, all persons, though Graduates of Oxford or Cambridge, who presumed, without undergoing

an examination before them, to prepare, compound, or dispense Medicines ; saving always and excepting Chemists and Druggists, who might exercise as before ' the trade or business' they had been accustomed ' to use.' Not only was this extraordinary power conferred on the Apothecaries' Company, but such was the confidence of the legislature in the members of this newly erected tribunal, that no limit was set to their discretion, except the obligation imposed on every candidate of a five years' apprenticeship to one of themselves. It was, in short, an act to serve the Apothecaries and save the Chemists, without any advantage to the public, and with injurious consequences to every Surgeon and Physician, who does not submit to be examined by the members of an inferior branch of his own profession."

In this quotation there are so many things asserted, which have little or no foundation in fact, and so much of the author's whole fabric rests upon it, that it must of necessity occupy some considerable space to comment upon its inconclusiveness. My first object will be to show that the author's endeavour to induce his readers to think lightly of the *functions* of the Apothecaries, and to confound them with the Chemists and Druggists, is gratuitous, and equally at variance with common sense and with veracity.

If the wound, inflicted by the refusal of certificates of qualification to incompetent Graduates from the Universities of Scotland, had not rankled in his breast, the candour of the author would hardly have allowed him to overlook the fact, that, the act of Parliament, 55 Geo. III. recognises the society of Apothecaries, as " persons brought up and skilful in the art, mystery, or faculty of Apothecaries," whereas the " Chemists and Druggists" are spoken of as only using and exercising " the trade or business of buying, preparing, compounding, dispensing, or vending drugs, medicines or medicinable compounds,"

If this recognition, in the words of the charter of King James I. of the right of the society of Apothecaries to exercise their art, mystery, or faculty, should be deemed insufficient to shew, that they had the privilege not only of visiting the sick and applying prescribed remedies, but also of investigating the nature of their diseases, and prescribing medicines for their removal; reference may be made to the case of *Rose v. the college of Physicians*, temp. Queen Anne. In this case, Rose, who was an Apothecary prosecuted by the college of Physicians for practising medicine, by an appeal to the House of Lords succeeded in reversing the judgment of the Court of Queen's Bench, and by this reversal established the important point, which was never afterwards contested, that the Apothecary was justified—

- “ 1. In judging of the disease and its nature from the constitution of the Patient, and many other circumstances.
2. In judging of the fittest and properest remedy for the disease.
3. In directing and ordering the application of the remedy to the disease.”

This decision, therefore, placed the members of the society of Apothecaries in a position, requiring medical qualifications and attainments little deserving the very contemptuous expressions, which the author of “Thoughts” chuses to apply; and decidedly elevated them above the rank of Chemists and Druggists, to which he would willingly degrade them.

The next part of the quotation to which I shall advert is that, in which the author accuses the Apothecaries Company of obtaining a new and lucrative privilege under

pretence of curing certain evils. Now in the first place the privilege has proved any thing but lucrative; in the next place, no *pretence* whatever was used by the society to obtain it.

Shakespeare, says “ some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them :” and it was this last which happened to the society of Apothecaries. They sought not the privilege; they made no *pretences* to obtain it; they have gained no lucre by it, but when it was conferred upon them, they determined to use the privilege conscientiously and honorably; and **THEY MAY BOLDLY ASSERT, DESPITE ALL THE CONTUMELLY, THE ASPERSIONS, THE CALUMNIES AND THE FALSEHOODS, TO WHICH THIS PRIVILEGE HAS EXPOSED THEM, THAT THEY HAVE DONE THEIR DUTY HONORABLY TO THEMSELVES, AND BENEFICIALLY TO THE PUBLIC AND TO THE PROFESSION.**

Let us enquire, how it happened, that the power of licensing the general Practitioner was placed in the hands of the society of Apothecaries; by so doing we may perhaps find out, that though the society put forth no pretences, many such false assumptions have been made by others.

Previous to the year 1815, that fascinating system of freedom from all restraint, in which the author of “*Thoughts*” so much delights, was in extensive operation. “*Every one had liberty to practise who could procure patients;*” and the consequence was, that not only was the community inundated with grossly ignorant Practitioners of Medicine, but, not unfrequently, for immorality is fond of associating with ignorance, they were found to be grossly immoral men. By a carefully conducted enquiry, respecting the Medical Practitioners, in four districts in the north of England, it was ascertained, that

there were 266 residents calling themselves, and practising as, medical men. Of these 68 only had received any sort of medical education, and 198 were practising upon the lives of their fellow creatures, not having received any education whatever. There is reason to believe, that in almost every district of England and Wales, the same proportion of educated and uneducated practitioners existed; and this may afford us a pleasing anticipation, of the advantages to be derived, from the admirable system of reform which the author proposes.

The simpletons, of twenty years ago, did not duly appreciate the advantages of permitting any one to practise, who could obtain patients; indeed the mischiefs, resulting from this iniquitous system, were so glaring and so constant, as to induce many to call loudly for reform, in this particular; and various proposals and suggestions were made with the view of putting a stop to so deplorable a degradation of Medical Practice. At length an Association of general Practitioners was formed, throughout England and Wales, to effect this object. The number of the Association was full *three thousand*, and among them were the names of some of the most eminent and influential men in London and in the Country, and some of the most active and indefatigable among them were natives of Scotland and Ireland.

At a very numerous general meeting of this Association held in London, a Committee consisting of men of the first rank, character, and abilities, was appointed to carry into effect certain resolutions, authorising an application to the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons and to the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries, requesting them to co-operate in an "Appeal to Parliament for legislative regulations of the Practice of Surgery, Pharmaceutic Medicine and Midwifery."

The original proposal of the Association was, that a "distinct privileged body should be established by the authority of Parliament," to examine all persons intending to become general Practitioners of Medicine, but to this proposal so many objections opposed themselves, as to shew the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of carrying it into effect. The Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons urged valid objections to the measure, as also did the Society of Apothecaries: Nor was this all; His Majesty's Ministers decidedly refused their assent to such a proposition; and being found impracticable, it was without much reluctance abandoned by the Pharmaceutical Committee. Finally, the privilege of licensing the general Practitioners having been offered to the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, and refused by them; all the parties concerned, after a discussion of two years,* agreed that the most advantageous, indeed the only, plan would be to vest the power in the Society of Apothecaries.

So far therefore was the "Apothecaries Company" from desiring to possess this power; so far were they from making pretences, as the author of "Thoughts" accuses them, for obtaining it, that it was only in compliance

* The proceedings of the Pharmaceutical Association differed in one very essential point from those of the Scottish Graduates: *they were not carried on in secret*. During the time that the Committee was incessantly engaged in their labours, various district Committees were formed, who published their proceedings in the country papers, and corresponded with the London Committee. Seven Reports of the Proceedings of this Committee were published in the Medical and other Journals, and in separate pamphlets; letters from more than *fifteen hundred* individuals, seeking for or giving information, were received and answered; and upwards of *forty thousand* circulars were distributed throughout the kingdom; besides several very able pamphlets which were published, and abundance of advertisements in the newspapers, paragraphs, letters, essays, &c. &c. Whatever was manly, strait forward, fair and open, the Committee wished to do, and they succeeded admirably.

with the united wishes of His Majesty's Ministers, of the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, and of the Committee of the Pharmaceutical Association, that they consented to accept the charge.

The author of "*Thoughts*" repeats the groundless assertion, which has been over and over again refuted, that on the Apothecaries' Company was conferred the power of imposing on every candidate the obligation of a five years' apprenticeship *to one of themselves*. How so absurd a falsehood could be circulated or credited, it is difficult to understand; the thing itself is impossible; no such power could be given: but it seems to have been thought a matter of much moment to propagate such a misrepresentation, and to found upon it a charge of monopoly. The fact is, that of more than 6000 persons examined by the Court of Examiners, not 200 have been apprentices to members of the Society of Apothecaries.

I come now to the last clause of the long quotation at p. 8. In this the author assures us, that the act has been "without any advantage to the public, and with injurious consequences to every Surgeon and Physician, who does not submit to be examined by the members of an inferior branch of his own profession."

First, as to the advantage to the public. Previous to the 1st of August, 1815, as already mentioned, no restraint whatever prevented any person from practising as an Apothecary; and at p. 12 is inserted from authentic documents, proofs of the immense number of ignorant pretenders, who were committing with impunity outrages upon the health and lives of His Majesty's liege subjects. Since that date to July 31, 1832, 6227 candidates for a license to practise have been examined by the court of Examiners, 680 have been rejected for want of sufficient knowledge of their profession, and these rejections cannot

but have saved the public from some injury ; 5547 have received certificates of qualification. Now before any one of these 5547 persons was allowed his certificate he was compelled to shew—

1. That he had served a regular and legal apprenticeship of five years to an Apothecary.
2. That during his apprenticeship he had been of good moral conduct.
3. That besides what he had learnt as an apprentice, he had pursued for the space of time required by the court of Examiners, such a course of studies as would give him a knowledge of Anatomy, and Physiology, of Chemistry and of the Materia Medica, &c.

It is therefore unquestionable that the public must have been essentially benefited both by the rejection of incompetent persons, and by the admission of those, who at least had laid a good foundation before they began to practise.

But, says our author, the act has been “injurious to every Surgeon and Physician, who does not submit to be examined by the members of an inferior branch of his own profession.” The author’s meaning here is not very easily understood. Why any Physicians and Surgeons should be desirous of submitting to be so examined, it is difficult to conjecture. They are at liberty to practise how and when and where they will, as Physicians and Surgeons ; the court of Examiners at Apothecaries’ Hall has no jurisdiction over them ; the general Practitioner yields precedence to them ; they are not interfered with or molested so long as they continue in their own higher branch of the profession. If indeed they voluntarily seek the third rank, instead of the first or second ; if they

chuse to leave their lofty stations and are content to be useful in a less splendid state, surely it can be no derogation to require from them, the same evidence of qualification which is required from every other person, in that rank to which they wish to belong.

But, putting out of the question those Surgeons and Physicians who wish to become Apothecaries and to whom assuredly no injury has been done, because none but the incompetent have been rejected; to what other Physicians and Surgeons have injurious consequences arisen from the Apothecaries Act?

The general Practitioners have undoubtedly displayed within the last eighteen years an increased amount of science and information: they are better anatomists, they are better chemists, their medical knowledge is on the whole more clear, distinct, and perfect; but has this injured the Royal College of Physicians? Neither the Fellows nor Licentiates have deteriorated as the general Practitioner has improved. Neither from Oxford nor Cambridge have proceeded fewer or less accomplished Physicians. The number of *Fellows* in the College has rather increased than diminished; and among the Licentiates a similar increase is observable. In number then the Royal College of Physicians is greater, and most assuredly the greatly improved science of the general Practitioner has not, nor will diminish the intellectual acquirements of the College of Physicians, nor prevent them from preserving the rank to which their erudition and talents have so deservedly raised them.

Is the College of Surgeons injured? on the contrary, their numbers have increased, and it is a curious fact which deserves to be recorded, that exactly in proportion as the court of Examiners at Apothecaries Hall have demanded a higher rate of medical information as a con-

dition of qualification in their candidates, in exactly such proportion has the admission of greater numbers into the College of Surgeons taken place.

Are there fewer pupils attending the schools of medicine? No. More schools have sprung up, and attendance upon the Lecturers is much more diligently given, because the mode of registration adopted by the court of Examiners, ensures attendance on the part of the pupils.

One most useful result has followed the improved regulations adopted by the court of Examiners. Excellent schools of medicine have been established at many of the Hospitals in the country. It is no longer necessary, that young men should come from a distance to London to attend lectures and hospital practice. For those who prefer it, schools are open in many large towns and cities, from whence young men, very well prepared, frequently come before the court of Examiners, having acquired an extensive and just knowledge of the various branches of medical science.

The following table will give some insight into the good, which has been silently and quietly accomplished by the court of Examiners at Apothecaries Hall. The court requires, that every candidate for a certificate of qualification shall have attended for twelve months the Physician's practice of an hospital containing at least sixty beds. Mark the attendance of pupils on the Physicians' practice of the London Hospitals at two periods—before the Act came into operation—and during the last year.

	In the Year 1814.	In the Year 1832.
Number of Physicians' Pupils } at St. Bartholomew's }	6	87
St. Thomas's	1	86
Guy's	16	62
London	0	20
Middlesex	1	32
St. George's	14	31
Westminster	0	8
	<hr/> 38	<hr/> 326

At very many dispensaries likewise pupils attend, where formerly none were found ; but the Court of Examiners thinking the attendance at dispensaries less efficient than at hospitals, require the attendance of the pupils to be for fifteen months.

The public, the profession, and the legislature appear to know very little indeed respecting the " Act for better regulating the Practice of Apothecaries throughout England and Wales ;" in what manner it was obtained, or by what means it is carried into effect. I have already shown how the act came to be obtained ; I will now describe how it is rendered efficacious.

Every year in the last week of July, the Master and Wardens of the Society of Apothecaries, together with the Court of Assistants, consisting altogether of twenty-four members, assemble, according to the regulations of the act of Parliament, to elect twelve members to form a Court of Examiners.

Every member of the Court of Examiners must be of at least ten years standing in the society ; he must not be a Member of the Court of Assistants ; he must not be attached to any School of Medicine ; he must not be a Lecturer in any department of the Science. Being elected, each Examiner is called before the Court of Assistants, and there takes a solemn oath that he will " faithfully, impartially, and honestly, according to the best of his skill and knowledge, execute the trust reposed in him as an Examiner, in the examination of every person to be examined as an Apothecary, without favor, affection, prejudice, or malice."

The new or re-elected Court of Examiners begin their functions always on the first Thursday in the month of August ; and the Court is compelled to meet once in every week, throughout the year, whether more or fewer candidates appear before them, or indeed if there be no candidate at all, the Court must be duly formed.

No candidate is either admitted or rejected on the examination of one Examiner only; three members of the Court at least witness every examination; and in the event of a rejection, the examination is always witnessed, by a majority of the Court, indeed a rejection never takes place, unless upon a shew of hands, seven members of the Court agree in deciding that the rejection is proper; and the same mode of deciding is adopted with regard to all that receive certificates of qualification.

The first Court of Examiners, which assembled on Thursday the 1st of August 1815, could not be very strict as to the qualifications required from candidates; but the successive Courts of Examiners, bearing in mind that the Practitioners who are licensed by them, are required—

- “ 1. To judge of the disease and its nature from the constitution of the Patient, and many other circumstances.
2. To judge of the fittest and properest remedy for the disease.
3. To direct or order the application of the remedy to the disease.”

have cautiously and gradually, but steadily, persevered in imposing a higher and higher standard of qualification from the candidates, and in the year 1828, they laid down a code of regulations, from which the most decidedly good effect* has been produced. Much to their satisfaction

* The following are the names of those who have been appointed Examiners, by the Court of Assistants, since the act was first carried into effect:—

Messrs. Simons	Messrs. Upton	Messrs. Malim	Messrs. J. L. Wheeler
T. Wheeler	Hunter	Blatch	H. C. Field
Ridout	Anderson	Bacot	E. Tegart
Hill	Tegart	Brande	Hurlock
Wells	Robinson	Seaton	Hunter
Field	Fallofeild	J. Ridout	Shillito
Browne	Williams	Hardy	Robinson
Burrows	Johnson	Merriman	

they have ascertained, that the requiring more extensive attainments, and a longer space of time for acquiring those attainments, have been generally acceptable to the students, and the profession at large. The encreased attention and labour has not deterred young men from entering into the profession ; on the contrary, they have become the more anxious to enroll themselves as members of the Medical Faculty, because they consider the Profession now to be more respectable and more honored. How such an improved state of imedical science and practice, can be otherwise than advantageous to the public, and to the profession, the author of "Thoughts" may if he thinks proper attempt to demonstrate ; but upon those who really think, his attempted demonstration will have but little weight.

The author of "Thoughts" has indulged his readers with his opinion, respecting "the education that ought to be required from candidates *for the highest honours in Medicine* : which may be divided into three heads,—preliminary, collateral, and professional." And he has drawn out a course of study which seems extremely well calculated to effect his object.

But the Court of Examiners of the Society of Apothecaries have anticipated him in many of the regulations he proposes ; for they have thought, that an extensive education is not only necessary for candidates, seeking "*the highest honours in Medicine*," but that such an education is *also* necessary for the Apothecary, who "ministers to *the great mass of the people* in the function of the Physician, and by the usage of society has the immediate superintendence of the public health entrusted to him. In the metropolis and the large provincial towns, he can be aided in cases of difficulty by the learning of the Physician ; but elsewhere he cannot avail himself of such valuable and desirable assistance ; and in cases of danger,

which are of frequent occurrence, he is obliged to rely exclusively upon his own resources, *and can alone be sustained under his awful responsibility, by a well founded reliance on a knowledge of his profession.*"

In regulating the degree and mode of education of the general Practitioner, the Court of Examiners had much to contend with. "Their Medical education was heretofore conducted in the most desultory manner; no systematic course of study was enjoined by authority, or established by usage: some subjects were attended to superficially and unprofitably, and others of great importance were neglected altogether. In their endeavours to remedy these defects, the Court of Examiners have been solicitous to proceed with the utmost circumspection, advancing progressively to the end in view, guided by their own experience, and aided by the suggestions offered by others to their consideration."

To show in how many points, the regulations of the Court of Examiners agree with the recommendations of the author of "Thoughts," I will quote from the code of "Regulations to be observed by students intending to qualify themselves to practise as Apothecaries throughout England and Wales," some important conditions, and place them in apposition with his recommendations.

Regulations of Court of Examiners for the Education of the General Practitioner.

1831.

"Before the student enters on his course of study more immediately professional, it is indispensably necessary that he should have received a classical educa-

Recommendations of Author of "Thoughts," for Physicians of the highest Class.

1833.

"The preliminary education should be a competent knowledge of the Greek and Latin, and of the French and German languages, with such proficiency in

tion. In addition to the benefits resulting therefrom in the mental discipline it affords, a familiar knowledge of Greek and Latin is imperatively requisite to the medical student, since most of the terms of art employed in Medicine and its associated sciences are derived from those languages, and his means of comprehending and retaining the information imparted by his teachers will materially depend on his acquaintance with them. That he may acquire the power of reasoning accurately on the complicated phenomena of life and disease, he will find the mathematical sciences of the greatest utility; and since many valuable contributions to professional literature have been made in the French and German languages, it is desirable, when opportunity offers or circumstances will permit, that the youth should also be instructed in those languages, so as to be enabled to read and translate them with facility."

"It is obvious that an education of this extent cannot be obtained in the limited time generally devoted to scholastic studies. The Court, therefore, advise that *the apprenticeship required by act*

Geometry and Algebra as to enable the student to follow the fundamental demonstrations of mechanical philosophy."

An excellent enumeration of "the *collateral* branches of science that ought to be required from a Physician of the first class" follows in the pamphlet.

"That the elements at least of these sciences may be acquired before the regular commencement of Medical education, no candidate should begin his course of professional study with a view to

of Parliament should not be entered on till the age of seventeen, and that during the two succeeding years especial care should be taken to keep up and improve, by daily reading, the knowledge previously acquired."

"Parents, in selecting a practitioner with whom to place their sons, should ascertain that he is legally qualified to practise as an Apothecary, and also satisfy themselves that the nature of his engagements will permit him to regulate and superintend the studies of his pupil. A systematic course of study should be arranged, by which the pupil might be conducted progressively from elementary principles to the practical observance of disease; neither wasting his time by exclusive attention to pharmaceutic manipulations, nor employing it with as little profit in a premature attendance on the sick. He may thus be enabled, at the age of twenty-two or twenty-three, to present himself for examination. The law certainly allows him to undergo his examination at the age of twenty-one; but considering the nature, variety, and extent of his studies, and that he is not likely at that early

graduation, till he had attained his eighteenth year."

"From the commencement of his professional education, five years' applications to study should be required from every candidate before he could present himself for examination."

"A particular course of study might be recommended in Medicine as the most conducive to improvement, but a servile adherence to it should not be exacted. It may be sufficient to require that certain branches of study should precede others." "If any one inverted that order, he should be obliged to attend a second time the course of lectures which he had followed, before he was qualified to benefit by them."

"When a student has completed his five years' course of professional education, he should be admissible to examination for a degree of the highest class. But to secure a proper knowledge of the preliminary and collateral

period to have an opportunity of commencing practise; a little further delay will be no present sacrifice, and cannot fail to be productive of great eventual advantage."

"Students must adduce proof of having devoted at least *two years* to an attendance on lectures and hospital practice; and of having attended the following courses of lectures. The lectures required in each course respectively, must be given on separate days.

CHEMISTRY.—Two courses, each course consisting of not less than forty-five lectures.

MATERIA MEDICA and THERAPEUTICS.—Two courses—each consisting of not less than forty-five lectures.

ANATOMY and PHYSIOLOGY—ANATOMICAL DEMONSTRATIONS.—Two courses of each of the same extent as required by the Royal College of Surgeons of London.

PRINCIPLES and PRACTICE OF MEDICINE.—Two courses—each consisting of not less than forty-five lectures, to be attended subsequently to the termination of the first course of Lectures on Chemistry, Materia Medica, and Anatomy and Physiology.

branches of study, he ought to be examined on these subjects before he is admitted to his Medical trials: and if it suited his convenience, he might undergo this preliminary examination before the commencement, or at any time during the course of his Medical studies."

"A course of Medical education would comprehend the following branches of study, **CHEMISTRY** and **BOTANY**, being placed among the collateral sciences.

1. **ANATOMY**, with practical Dissection.
2. **PHYSIOLOGY** and **PATHOLOGY**, taught by separate lectures, or included in the same course, under the name of Institutes or Theory of Physic.
3. **PRACTICE OF PHYSIC.**
- 4.* **SURGERY** and **SURGICAL DISEASES.**
5. **MIDWIFERY**, with **DISEASES of WOMEN** and **CHILDREN.**
6. **CLINICAL LECTURES ON MEDICINE.**
- 7.* **CLINICAL LECTURES ON SURGERY.**

* The Court of Examiners at Apothecaries' Hall, not being authorized to examine in Surgery, have of course no right to insist on the Candidates studying this branch of Medical science.

BOTANY.—One course.

MIDWIFERY and the DISEASES of WOMEN and CHILDREN.—Two courses—to be attended during the second year.

FORENSIC MEDICINE.—One course to be attended during the second year.

8. MATERIA MEDICA and PHARMACEUTIC CHEMISTRY.

9. MEDICAL JURISPRUDENCE.

Students are likewise recommended to avail themselves of instruction in *Morbid Anatomy*."

"The candidate must also have attended for *twelve months*, at least, the Physicians' Practice at an Hospital, containing not less than sixty beds, and where a course of Clinical Lectures is given: or for *fifteen months* at an Hospital where Clinical Lectures are not given: or for *fifteen months* at a Dispensary *connected with some Medical School recognised by the Court*. The whole of such attendance to be subsequent to the first year of attending Lectures."

"In addition to these suggestions there is another most important point to which the Court of Examiners solicit the especial attention of the Physicians connected with Hospitals and recognised Dispensaries. Under their instruction at the bedside of the

"With these Lectures should be combined attendance on Hospitals and Dispensaries; and at least six months' practical application to the art of compounding and preparing Medicines for use."

"No Physician ought ever to write a prescription which he is not able to prepare with his own hands."

"To enlarge on the necessity of a sedulous attendance on Hospitals would be superfluous, as every one engaged in the study of Physic is fully aware that familiarity with the appearances of disease is the only mode of impressing its features on the

clause was not introduced by the Society or proposed by it. The Committee which was appointed to carry the Bill through Parliament consisted of some members of the Society of Apothecaries and some members of the Pharmaceutic Association. This Committee drew up a Bill in which there was no clause respecting apprenticeship. The Bill passed the Commons, and was carried to the Lords. In its progress through the Lords the Bill was objected to because it had no such clause: the clause as it now stands was introduced by one of their Lordships, and it was expressly stated to the managing Committee, that without such clause the Bill would not be allowed to pass. What was the managing Committee to do? they preferred having the clause, rather than for their labours to be lost by the rejection of the Bill. Upon the whole, there can be no doubt, that the clause has proved highly advantageous; inasmuch as it has secured a good state of discipline and moral conduct to a large majority of those, who have passed the Hall. But whether the clause be good or bad, it was forced upon the Society of Apothecaries; it was as before stated, neither proposed by them, nor supported by them; it was the entire act of the House of Lords.

The Court of Examiners have been blamed for adhering to, and maintaining this clause; what else could they do? were they to fly in the face of an Act of Parliament? The clause runs thus "Provided always and be it enacted, that *no person shall be admitted to any such examination for a Certificate to practise as an Apothecary, unless he shall have served an Apprenticeship of not less than five years to an Apothecary, and unless he shall produce testimonials to the satisfaction of the said Court of Examiners, of a sufficient Medical education, and of a good moral conduct.*" The clause is imperative and cannot be

suspended at the will of the Court. They might with just as much reason do away with the "sufficient Medical education," and "good moral conduct." It is impossible that they can do otherwise, than they have done, while this clause, which has called down upon them, so unworthily, so much obloquy, remains a part of the statute.

Secondly—respecting the Scottish Graduates. Having before our eyes, so woeful a proof of the insufficiency of many, among those, who have presented themselves for examination, it would be hazarding too much to open the gate very wide, for their admission into the profession, as General Practitioners. If indeed a strict, impartial and ample system of examination be adopted at the Universities, by which the Public could be assured, that the Graduates were competently educated, it might be sufficient, to let such Graduates without further examination be registered as Apothecaries before the Court of Examiners; but unless this examination be as complete as that before the Court of Examiners, the examination would be deceptive, as to the Public, and the general Practitioner in England would be cruelly wronged. While the Professors at the Universities, by whom the young men are taught, continue to be their Examiners, no such exact and rigid examination as is requisite, is likely to be adopted. It is in human nature to wish, that those with whom we have been in daily communication; with whom we are connected by any of the ties of humanity, should obtain their desired object. The Professors at the Universities cannot but be, in a great degree, under the influence of this amiable trait of character, and therefore the Professors ought not to be the Examiners.

It has been alleged, in favor of these rejected Graduates, that the Court of Examiners have treated them with great rigour, and have required of them replies to questions,

which were foreign from the purpose, hard to be understood, and purposely rendered difficult. That these reports have been propagated by the rejected men themselves, is very well known : but why the Court of Examiners should act thus illiberally towards them is not explained. Profit to the Examiners it could not be, for no fee whatsoever is paid by a rejected man. Policy it could not be, for every such rejection is well known to draw down upon the Court, much ill-will and vituperation. Malice or pique, it could not be, for this must be either partial or general ; if it was general against Graduates from Scotland, sixteen out of twenty-four would not have been passed ; and for partial malice or pique, is it in nature that seven out of the twelve Examiners would be influenced by it ? yet seven at least, must have consented to it before the man was rejected. The literal truth is, that the men were insufficient and the Court did their duty in the refusal to grant them certificates.

Another explanation has been offered about these Graduates. Some, it is said, thought it beneath their rank, forsooth, to be examined, and disdained to reply to the questions of the Examiners. If this disdain will comfort them in their rejection, so much the more happy for them ; but with this explanation of their rejection, surely none but themselves, will be satisfied.





